

NEW ENGLAND NOTE

COTONEASTER DIVARICATUS (ROSACEAE)
NATURALIZED IN MASSACHUSETTS

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Cotoneaster divaricatus Rehder & E. H. Wilson (spreading cotoneaster) is native to central China, and planted as an ornamental in eastern Massachusetts. The fruits of *Cotoneaster* are attractive to birds, which disseminate the seed. In Europe this has led to an increasing number of reports of bird-sown naturalized species, spread from garden and roadside ornamental plantings (Fryer and Hylmö 1995, 1997; Stace 1997). Jeanette Fryer (pers. comm.) informs me that some of the European birds involved include waxwings (*Bombycilla garrulus*), blackbirds (*Turdus merula*), and redwings (*Turdus iliacus*). In western North America, I have repeatedly observed American robins (*Turdus migratorius*) and American crows (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) eating the fruits of five *Cotoneaster* taxa, all of which are easily found as seedlings under crow roosts and other bird perches. Both of these birds are common in Cotuit, Barnstable County, Massachusetts. In light of this frugivorous interaction, it is not surprising that large and old ornamental plantings of *C. divaricatus* near the Cotuit library are the epicenter of widely scattered clusters of apparently bird-sown *C. divaricatus*. Within a one-mile radius of the town library I found ten colonies of adventive *Cotoneaster* scattered among native trees and shrubs in thickets, on roadsides, in suburban yards, and at the edge of second-growth oak woods. Seedlings were common in the vicinity of cultivated plants, and occasional around older wild plants. I would consider this one diffuse population of *C. divaricatus*, with ca. 50–200 wild plants, and probably reproducing outside of cultivation for many years.

VOUCHER SPECIMEN: Massachusetts: Barnstable Co., Cotuit, Barnstable, from thickets near the junction of School Street and Main Street, 8 Jul 2001, Zika 16,349 (NEBC, WTU).

This colony is representative of the population, found at elevations of 10–25 ft., on dry sandy substrates, and its associates include some aggressive adventives as well as native species: *Acer campestre* L., *A. platanoides* L., *A. pseudoplatanus* L., *A. rubrum* L., *Berberis thunbergii* Alph. de Candolle, *Campsis radicans* (L.) Seem. ex Bureau, *Celastrus orbiculatus* Thunb. ex A. Murray, *Euonymus alatus* (Thunb.) Siebold, *Lonicera ×bella* Zabel, *L. morrowii* A. Gray, *Populus alba* L., *Prunus serotina* Ehrh., *Quercus coccinea* Münchh., and *Rhus typhina* L. This appears to be the first report of the genus as an escape from cultivation in Massachusetts (Kartesz 1999; Sorrie and Somers 1999).

LITERATURE CITED

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